

FOLKSONG

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An absurd story, one may feel inclined to say, reading the summary and the verses here given. As relating to a tiger and a cow, it is made unnecessarily impossible. For, accepting the main incidents for the sake of the moral as an animal story, there is really no reason why the tiger should have given up its life. To make a tiger talk of God seems also ludicrous. The poet of the story should have felt much of this criticism himself. The people who hear it also know that no such cow or tiger can exist. To the unsophisticated reader or the average audience, however, the animals as such are out of focus and vague shadows. The mind is engaged by the ideas for which the animals stand. Cow and tiger are out of view and the mother and the young one, the other mothers and the enemy, the honesty of the mother and the sorrow of the young one, the sympathy of the other mothers and the magnanimity of the enemy—these only are present. To sympathy, the soul here is more than the body. The facts are merely mask in such a case ; the characters in the drama are the living truths behind. The story is well known ; yet, few people, hearing it, are able to restrain tears or ejaculation of admiration or triumph as the narrative develops.

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What large variety of folksong there is in the Karnataka should have appeared from these

examples;
also how good the poetry in them is. At its
best this
poetry is classic in manner and content,
The only
reason for calling it popular is that it comes
from the
people and is understood by the people;
and that the